

10-2-69



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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MEMORANDUM

*Return*

*BR*

October 1, 1969

TO: ~~ARA - Mr. Charles A. Meyer~~  
FROM: ARA/BR - Robert W. Dean *PL*  
SUBJECT: Presidential Succession in Brazil

Within the next week or two we expect to see the following developments in Brazil: President Costa e Silva and Vice-President Pedro Aleixo will resign; Congress will be reconvened; it will approve a revised Constitution and endorse the choice of Armed Forces High Command, General Emilio Medici, as the new President of Brazil; Medici will choose Labor Minister Passarinho to be the new Vice-President; the Cabinet Ministers will submit their resignations and within a few days some of the resignations will be accepted; Education Minister Tarso Dutra, Planning Minister Beltrao and Agriculture Minister Arzua probably will be among the first to go.

In our view, this scenario is the best of the several alternatives that could be considered realistic under present conditions in Brazil. Medici is a "law and order" type and conservative by U.S. standards, but not a radical hard-liner. He is well regarded in military circles and should have a unifying and calming influence on the military in the present tense atmosphere. He gained considerable experience in national governmental affairs during his tenure as Chief of the National Information Service (the Brazilian CIA). Passarinho is a very able politician and administrator whose political position is ideologically that of a moderate Christian Democrat. He rejects Communism and "extreme capitalism", and believes that Brazil's main problems are the hunger and poor living conditions of the people. He is strongly anti-communist, but has proven in the past that he can and does differentiate between mere left-wingers and communists. He has a forceful, dynamic personality and would not accept the position of Vice-President unless he were allowed to play an important role in the decision making process. If his advice is heeded, greater stress will be placed on solving the socio-economic problems of the country. One important indication of his influence in the new regime would be the adoption of a new wage policy which he has advocated unsuccessfully in the past.

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Declassified Authority: 44281 By: Laurie  
Madsen Date: 04-14-2015

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Some Cabinet changes are long overdue. A "new look" in the Ministry of Education is particularly desireable, and Medici's choice for this post will be a key indicator of the character of the new government. The same applies to the Ministries of Agriculture, Planning, and Health. In this regard we take some encouragement from the following extract from our biographic report on Medici, "He was also dissatisfied with the Costa e Silva Administration's lack of progress on administrative, social and economic reforms, especially social and economic reforms in rural areas".

NOTE: I have also heard from Herb Okun in the Secretary's office, who knew General Medici in Brasilia, that the General is no brain and is uninspiring, [redacted]

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[redacted] that Medici is a very mediocre individual selected because he is non-controversial and the least common denominator among the 4-star generals.

*PL*

cc: ARA - Mr. Crimmins

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